

## HIS STORMY WOOING

By...  
IZOLA L. FORRESTER

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"Then it is 'No' again?"  
MacDowell's voice was reflective and regretful. He did not look at the small, erect figure in brown linen sitting in solitary state on the old fallen log among the pine needles. The serious hazel eyes regarded him with a calm, disinterested independence that was exasperating.  
"It is always 'No.' This is the fourth time."  
"Three and a half." There was a flash of mischief in her quick smile. "You only got as far as a lifetime of devotion last time, and Mr. Tisdale came for his waltz. When will you try again?"  
"Never!" His voice was quiet. She could not see his face. "I give up the fight. I think that even you will grant I have made a hard one for the cause, and since it is hopeless I shall leave Arleigh."  
"For the summer?" She dug the point of her parasol a trifle viciously in among the innocent pine needles.  
"No. Indefinitely. I expect to go to Japan on business and from there



THE BURDEN IN HIS ARMS GREW HEAVIER WITH EVERY DRAGGING STEP.

will merely drift anywhere. It does not matter so long as I do not drift into Arleigh harbor and try again for the fourth time."

She did not answer. There was a new tone in his voice that troubled her, a tone of cynicism and finality. She looked off at the broad half moon of the bay and shivered at the sudden chill in the air since the sun had gone down. The sea looked gray, with long wreaths of swirling white foam where the tide was coming in full. There was a dull, low roar to the breaking waves on the beach below, and the anchored yachts out in the bay were tugging and straining like restive horses as the swell plunged them to and fro.

"We had better go back," MacDowell said presently, turning to her. "There is a storm coming up."

"I like a storm." She took off her hat rebelliously and fastened it with the pins to the log. The wind caught her hair and blew it in a brown veil across her eyes, and she held it back, laughing as she looked up at him. "You may go if you wish."

He frowned and threw himself down on the ground near the edge of the bluff.

"I suppose that is one reason why I love you," he said bitterly. "You are so charmingly tractable. You always do as I say."

"There is no necessity for sarcasm." The little square chin tilted higher. Miss Dunderdale felt indignant. "You always wish me to do something that I don't want to do. And you are—are masterful."

She brought out the hateful word solemnly, and he shrugged his shoulders. There is something most annoying in a person shrugging his shoulders at you when you want to argue. It implies mental superiority and an impregnable stand. She closed her lips tightly. She would not say another word. He could go to Japan or the moon. It was a matter of the utmost indifference to her. She turned away from the stalwart figure on the ground and looked off at the storm clouds racing up from the breast of the sea on the horizon, her chin on her palm, one small foot swinging to and fro expressively as she reviewed the case of Hugh MacDowell.

There were just thirty-seven good and excellent reasons why she should marry him. Cecil knew all thirty-seven by heart. They were rehearsed to her with faithful exactitude by an anxious bevy of sisters and cousins and aunts.

And there was but one reason why she should not. She did not choose to.

To Cecil the one reason was sufficient and outweighed all the good and excellent thirty-seven. To the anxious bevy it was a foolish and willful obstacle set up before one of the happiest chances fate ever offered a girl.

MacDowell was twenty-nine—a graceful fortune back of him, who had come from his globe trotting cultured broad minded and cosmopolitan, with

his native American point of view still fresh and optimistic.

Cecil's elderly relatives dwelt loving on these points. Her younger ones veered to the outward and visible signs of grace and said the tall, six foot wooer was handsome and altogether desirable.

That was just it. He was too desirable. He was faultless. Ever since he had come down to Arleigh, Cecil had felt herself lifted bodily by fate, assisted slightly by the anxious bevy, and thrown at his head and heart.

Any other man in his position would have courteously and diplomatically avoided the snare. He had walked into it, eyes open, lips smiling and arms extended to receive fate's gift. Wherefore the gift, with faithful feminine contrariness, declined being received.

There was a sudden vivid glare that ripped the heavy mass of clouds from end to end and a long crashing peal of thunder like cannon. The sea seemed to swell and leap to meet the sky. The boughs of the pines lashed up and down like fragile breeze blown ferns as the wind swept over them.

At the second crash Cecil rose and turned instinctively to the trees for shelter, but the gale caught her, and she would have fallen only for MacDowell's firm clasp of her arm. Almost instantly the whole world of land and sea and sky seemed on fire, and she shrank back into his arms with a cry of fear as a bolt struck a kingly pine that towered above its brothers a few yards away and left it a blasted, smoking ruin.

Before she could recover herself he had lifted her in his arms and gained the path that led down over the face of the bluff.

"We can't get to the shore," she exclaimed. "The tide is in."

"Put your arms around my neck and keep still," he answered curtly. "We can't stay up here."

She obeyed in silence, and he made his way down the path. What had been a smooth stretch of sand was now a swirling mass of low breakers. MacDowell paused an instant for breath as he reached it and looked down at the face on his shoulder. Her eyes were closed. A wild impulse seized him, and he bent and kissed her. The next instant he was knee deep in the waves, struggling in the teeth of the gale to where the shore curved and safety lay, and he fancied that the arms around his neck were clasped closer than before, although the eyes were still closed and the face was white and still.

The waves leaped and snarled with a hissing roar at his feet like a pair of hungry wolves, and he was forced to stop again and again and lean back against the bluff as the wind beat down on him. The burden in his arms grew heavier with every dragging step, but at length the beach shelved and broadened, and he staggered up the higher ground in safety and laid her down under the shelter of the overhanging rocks.

The first wild fury of the storm had passed, and only a faint rumble of distant thunder broke the stillness. She opened her eyes and looked up at him as he knelt beside her. Something new in their hazel depths seemed to answer the cry of his heart, and he raised two small cold hands to his lips. "Cecil," he asked, "must I go?"

The first soft gleam of midsummer moonlight was casting a path of silver scales on the water when they reached the hotel veranda. The soft, delicious music of a mandolin orchestra came through the bright lighted windows, and they paused a moment in the shadow of the clinging vines to look back at the sea.

"I knew you would try the fourth time," she said laughingly as she raised her face to his. "Japan is so far away!"

### "A Canvasbacked Clam."

Traveling on the continent of Europe with a party of young Americans, I was witness of their dismay at being assailed from time to time by friendly English fellow travelers with such questions as these: "Is it not very lonely in America? Are there any singing birds there? Any wild flowers? Any bishops? Are there booths in the streets of New York? Do people read English books there? Have they heard of Ruskin and how?" These were from the rank and file of questioners, while a very cultivated clergyman lost caste somewhat with our young people by asking confidently, "Are Harvard and Yale both in Boston?" a question which seemed to them as hopelessly blighted as the remark of a lady just returned from the wonders of the new world who had been impressed, like all visitors, with the novelties offered in the way of food at the Baltimore dinner tables, but still sighed with regret at having been obliged to come away without eating a "canvasbacked clam."

—Thomas Wentworth Higginson in Atlantic.

### Witty Response of Lecturer.

A professor who acted as chairman of a meeting at which Max O'Rell was to lecture introduced the Frenchman in the following manner:

"Ladies and gentlemen, when we wish to see ourselves as individuals we have recourse to the mirror. This we cannot do as a nation. I take pleasure in introducing a gentleman who will act as a French mirror, by means of which you will, I am sure, obtain an adequate and pleasing view of yourselves as a nation."

The introduction pleased O'Rell, and he responded in a vein as jovial. "I am requested to reflect on a nation. However, I must take second place to the man in the moon, for he reflects on the earth. As an imported French mirror, I shall do the best I can to give you a correct picture of the nation. And if your chairman remains where he is, in the background, he will add greatly to the reflective power of the mirror."

## Colonel Lisenby's Romance

By ANGUS BLANTYRE

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"An old man, Miss Edith, who begins to feel his age," said the colonel. "But you are not old, Colonel Lisenby. I am sure that few of the young men of today hold themselves as erect as you do, and I am quite sure that I have met few of them who have that graceful, deferential manner of yours in the presence of women. I think you are wrong to say that all romance must be dead for you," said the girl laughingly.

They were sitting on the piazza of a country house on the Hudson. From open windows streamed lights and the buzz of conversation, which showed that the guests were enjoying themselves after the fashion of guests in country houses. Before them and beneath them lay the moonlit expanse of the Hudson, and on the other side they could make out the bold line of the precipitous shore.

Tall, slender and graceful, the youth of the girl's twenty years showed in sharp contrast to the fifty odd years of the handsome, soldierly looking man who stood at her side.

"When you were younger, Miss Edith," said the colonel, "you used to be very fond of having me tell you stories, and I think I will tell you one now if you are sure it will not bore you."

"Please do, colonel. I used to think that there was no one who could tell such delightful stories beginning, 'Once upon a time.'"

"This story begins in the same way, Miss Edith. 'Once upon a time' nearly forty years ago a young man was very much in love with a very beautiful woman. The two lived in a little southern village on the Mississippi river and had been playmates through childhood. It was an understood thing between the families of the two that the boy and girl should be married when they were grown.

"One day a foolish little quarrel came up between the two young people, and it was not made up as soon as it should have been. Perhaps the



"YOU DO ME AN INJUSTICE," SAID THE COLONEL.

man was wrong; at any rate, he was heartily sorry afterward that he did not say he was wrong and make peace in that way.

"Before the quarrel was made up the civil war broke out, and the young man considered it his duty to go to the front in the ranks of the southern army. It was his luck to see a great deal of fighting and to win promotion more than once. At Gettysburg he was badly wounded and captured. For months he lay in a hospital and on his recovery was confined in a northern prison until the end of the war.

"When the war was over, he was released and hurried back to the little village he had lived in. There he found that the woman he loved was dead. Her mother told him that it had been said in the village that he was killed at Gettysburg and that when nothing was heard of him afterward the girl had died of a broken heart.

"If the man could have had his wish, he would have died also, but he was not cowardly enough to resort to suicide, and he lived. He came to New York and sought forgetfulness in the hardest of hard work. Success came to him in ample measure, and, what he valued more, he found in his work something of the forgetfulness he sought.

"Memory of the woman he had loved did not leave him. The man himself in his bitterest moments never wished for that.

"The man, as the old memories became dulled after many years, began to wonder if it was best for him to always live a solitary life. Then he began to wonder if he was not in love with a beautiful young girl whom he knew and then resolved to ask her to marry him. Do you think he did right?"

The girl did not answer for a moment, and then she said in a voice so low and sympathetic that you could almost detect the ring of tears in it:

"I am thinking of the woman who

died. I do not believe the man will ever forget her if he loved her as much as you say. I know that if I were to die I would want Jack to love me always, as the man you have told me of loved the woman, and not to think of another woman."

The girl was looking with tear dimmed eyes across the river to where the lights of West Point could be seen on top of the Palisades.

The man's glance followed hers. Neither spoke for a moment, and then, with an effort which he hoped was not visible to the girl, the man said:

"So you are engaged to Jack Carter? I thought I was too old a friend not to have been told of this before?"

"I meant to have told you this evening," said the girl. "Jack says you were so good about getting him appointed to the academy that we have both felt grateful to you. But we neither of us thought that you would be at all interested in a romance."

"You do me an injustice," said the colonel, with a little dry laugh. "I am always interested in romance—for instance, the one which I have been just telling you. I know the man and have taken a great deal of interest in the case. I shall advise him not to propose to the girl. But you must permit me to tell you that I wish you all happiness and that I consider Jack a very lucky fellow."

"They are beginning to dance, colonel. Won't you come in with me?"

"Thanks. I fancy my dancing days are over. I think I will stay here and smoke a cigar."

The girl stepped in through one of the open windows, and the man lit a cigar.

Perhaps it was the moonlight on the water, perhaps it was the old waltz tune which floated out of the windows of the house, perhaps the old memories were brought up so keenly by the story he had told the girl on the piazza. Whatever the cause, the effect was to carry the mind of the man back to another time and another scene.

The Hudson became another river, the Palisades on the farther side became a low, wooded shore. The breeze which came from the river seemed heavy with scent of magnolia. The man who paced slowly up and down the piazza was young again.

At his side there seemed to walk a woman as beautiful and as young as the girl who had just left him. But the beauty of this woman was of the south, and her dress was of the fashion of forty years ago. The measure of forgetfulness which time had granted the man slipped away, and the old keen heartache woke once again to poignant life.

And the man walking with memories and ghosts in the pure, calm moonlight thanked God that the heartache was alive once more.

### The Causes of Cynicism.

Cynicism is never a native quality of the mind. It always has its birth in some unhappy experience. The young man finds that the girl who has gathered up for him all the harmony and melody of earth rings hollow at the test, and he drops his lyrical language and becomes cynical of women. The citizen of Boston has naturally grown cynical of newspapers. The candidate for public office who has been definitely retired to private life by being "knifed" at the polls distrusts party politics. A man publishes a novel and therefore is cynical of the publishers of novels. Yet these misfortunes have their salutary aspect. The disappointed lover, generalizing bitterly upon the sex, is not always implacable. A cooler judgment tempers and restores his passion, gives it another object and so guides him to a safer if less gusty and emotional love. The citizen of Boston, the betrayed candidate, the blighted young novelist, all have for their condition, even though they know it not, a valuable compensation, for the very event that has brought them to this pass of reasonable cynicism has stirred their indignation—yes, in spite of their seeming inertness, indignation is now smoldering.—Arthur Stanwood Pier in Atlantic.

### Her Cigars.

"My dear," said he the day after their wedding anniversary, "I'll just take those cigars to the office. It's customary, you know, to have a box handy in one's office."

That morning he sent the box of Extras down to his friend Jones, with his compliments, and he chuckled at the joke he was playing on Jones.

When he met Jones in the elevator he was persuaded to have one of his own cigars, which Jones said were "all right." He accepted one and, to his dismay, found they were "all right."

That evening when he arrived at home he said to his wife: "My dear, I smoked one of those cigars you gave me and liked it very much. How did you happen to pick out such good ones?"

"Well, I'll tell you. You made such a fuss about your birthday box that I got the young man next door to buy this box for me."

"Oh-h-h!" said the dear husband. And he muttered to himself, "Just like a woman, bless her—always go contrary to expectations!"—Buffalo Times.

### English Kissing Customs.

At Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, at periodic intervals the mayor and corporation assert their rights over the shores of their native river by proceeding in state to various points, where they proclaim their authority. Perhaps as an inducement for the mayor to undertake this particular duty, on landing on the green he is permitted by ancient custom to kiss the prettiest girl present, conferring upon her a sovereign as compensation. At Bourne-mouth, where the kiss mayoral is also conferred, it is an ancient and loving custom for the retiring mayor to give his successor an ecclesiastical salute.

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